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Recommendations to the Executive Board

Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

Summary

The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the following:

(a) A five-year extension of the programme of cooperation with the EradiPolio programme of Rotary International for the period 2001 to 2005, in accordance with the terms of the original Board document (E/ICEF/1998/P/L.25), and in pursuit of the mission of the other resource programmes already offered by the availability of specific-purpose contributions from Rotary International;

(b) A five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 2001 to 2005, in accordance with the terms of the original Board document (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41).

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I. Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication

1. In 1996, the Executive Board approved a five-year extension of cooperation with the PolioPlus programme of Rotary International (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62) to provide support to national immunization programmes for polio eradication activities globally (E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1, decision 1996/17). Since the inception of this programme, Rotary International has provided nearly $200 million to UNICEF for polio eradication efforts in over 70 countries, and has been one of the most important donors in supporting routine and supplemental vaccine needs.

2. Since 1988, the number of polio cases annually has decreased from an estimated 350,000 to just over 7,000 in 1999. Rotary International has indicated its long-standing and close working relationship with UNICEF, and expects to contribute $20 million to UNICEF from 2001 to 2005 for the purchase of oral polio vaccines and operational costs.

3. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve a five-year extension of the programme of cooperation with the PolioPlus programme of Rotary International for the period 2001 to 2005, in accordance with the original Board document (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.35), and an increase of $20 million in funding from other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions from Rotary International.

II. Extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

4. In 1996, the Executive Board approved a five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative (VII) (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62 and E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1, decision 1996/7). VII is an interregional programme, which created and capitalized a revolving fund to enhance the ability of developing countries to procure, with their own currencies, high-quality, low-cost vaccines in quantities adequate to reach and sustain universal child immunization and the disease control goals of the decade. The original programme was approved for the period 1991-1995 in the amount of $10 million in other resources. The Executive Board approved the extension in accordance with the terms of the original Board document (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.35).

5. To date, 31 countries (19 plus the 12 Pacific Island countries) have agreements through VII for use of the revolving fund. An additional five countries have modified agreements for direct use of UNICEF procurement services. Six others, which were originally VII countries, are now financing vaccines and procuring directly on the international market.

6. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve a five-year extension of VII for the period 2001 to 2005, in accordance with the terms of the original Board document, with an increase in funding from other resources in the amount of $10 million so that participating countries will be able to expand the procurement of new vaccines and additional countries will be able to participate. VII will be used as one financing mechanism for countries within the overall framework of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).